

Chapter Two: From Hamlet to City

John Paul, Lewis Davis, and Jonathan Lyons on June 11, 1808, purchased 378.29 acres, the fractional sections 2 and 3 of Township III, North Range X East, at the recently opened land office in Jeffersonville, Indiana.¹ Over two years elapsed before these men used the land for the town site of Madison. In December 1810 the proprietors chose the highest point above the second bank and laid out the town in a grid pattern of four blocks, 16 squares of eight lots each (Figure 1). They named the bordering streets Fourth, East, West, and High, and these streets were to be 60 feet wide. Main Cross and Main Street were to be 90 feet wide.² The proprietors on February 18, 1811, sold 34 of the original 126 lots laid off, marking the town's formal beginning.³

Madison experienced three periods of expansion following the settlement of Old Town. The first occurred from 1815 to 1817, stimulated, in part, by the prosperity that attended the end of frontier hostilities in the War of 1812. The second took place from 1822 to 1826, when ports in the British West Indies and in Canada opened to American farm products. During those years New Orleans became the outlet for the agricultural

¹Jeffersonville Land Office, Register of Certificates, 1808-1816, Registration No. 105 (Archives Division, Indiana State Library).

²Original Plat Book A (Recorder's Office, Jefferson County Court House, Madison, Indiana), 41.

³Testimony of John Vawter, auctioneer at first sale of town lots, Trustees of the City of Madison vs John Paul, 5.

surplus of almost the entire southern part of the Old Northwest. Wheat and corn could be carried to the British West Indies duty free, while flour paid a slight duty of five shillings a barrel.⁴ "Until the thirties," Thomas Senior Berry has concluded in his study of antebellum western commerce, "a considerable portion of Ohio Valley flour and provisions was destined not for the South nor Atlantic ports, but for the West Indies and South America."⁵ The third period of expansion began in 1835 and followed an uninterrupted course until 1854, when Madison achieved its maximum antebellum dimensions (Figure 1). This latter period of growth corresponded to the expansion of Ohio River steamboat trade in the thirties and to improvement of land transport to Madison via the Michigan Road and the Madison and Indianapolis Railroad, which the state began to build in the 1830s.

During Madison's early years its settlers made little progress in development of their town. Until 1815 the bottom on which the village was located remained almost entirely covered with woods, only a small area cleared for houses. Main Street was the only street cleared of trees. Main Cross was laid out only a little way toward Mulberry. "A person had to drive around logs and trees to go anywhere. The timber was cut to make a show, but was not cut up or hauled away."⁶ When John Melish

⁴Albert L. Kohlmeier, The Old Northwest as the Keystone of the Arch of American Federal Union (Bloomington, Indiana, 1938), 8-9.

⁵Berry, Western Prices Before 1861, 22.

⁶John Burns quoted in Bicknell, The Vawter Family in America, 388. James F. D. Lanier recalled when he arrived in 1817, "The town...was still a forest--the trees that were not standing almost covered the ground where they fell." Sketch of the Life of J. F. D. Lanier (second edition, New York, 1877), 10.

visited Madison in the summer of 1811 the place contained twelve families;⁷ three years later the number had not increased. The population may have declined, for one visitor to the settlement in 1814 reported, "There were eight or ten families in the town, not more."⁸

Madison during those years was a primitive settlement made up of a collection of one and two-story cabins and log houses, some of which served several functions. Melish found three taverns; these early enterprises probably belonged to John Wagoner, John Booth, and John and Nathaniel Hunt. Wagoner, a tavern keeper from Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, in 1808 built the first cabin within the bounds of Madison's Old Town on the second bank or rise from the river; the site later became the northeast corner of Mulberry and High streets. Wagoner and his wife had floated down the river on a flatboat, called a "broadhorn," and used the lumber from the boat for the floor of their cabin.⁹ In February 1811 the local territorial court met in Wagoner's cabin and along with its other business granted him a license to keep a tavern.¹⁰ Like Wagoner, Booth, who was granted a license in June 1811, kept his tavern in his house.¹¹ Exactly when the Hunts opened their business is not clear, but by 1813 they had a tavern called the Cross Keys on the north side of Main Cross between Mulberry and Main. The Hunt

⁷Melish, Travels in the United States, II, 142.

⁸Bicknell, The Vawter Family, 388.

⁹William P. Hendricks, Biographical and Historical Souvenir (Chicago, 1889), 213; obituary, Madison Daily Courier, February 19, 1855.

¹⁰Order Book, First Indiana Territorial Court of Common Pleas, Madison, Jefferson County, 1811-1812, typescript (Jefferson County Library, Madison, Indiana), 2.

¹¹Ibid., 6.

establishment was a two-story building of hewn logs with a double porch extending across its front.¹²

Melish in 1811 found two general stores, two hatters, two blacksmiths, one brickmaker, and one stonemason in the settlement.¹³ John Vawter probably opened the first general store on the southeast corner of Main Cross and Main Street. He had come to Madison in 1806 with his father, Jesse Vawter, who settled on the bluff above the town. Exactly when Vawter established his store cannot be determined, but it was before 1815, for in that year he sold out and moved to Jennings County.¹⁴ Nothing is known about the other store noted by Melish nor any of the artisans, with the exception of one of the hatters, Dawson Blackmore, who had come to Madison in June 1811 and built a one-story hewn log house on Walnut Street between Second and High.¹⁵ Like Madison's other early businessmen, Blackmore operated largely on a barter system. In 1814 he advertised in the Western Eagle, that hats "will be given for good corn or good seven hundred linen, flour, flax, and tallow by the subscriber."¹⁶ In addition to its being his house and place of business, it served as a fort with loop-holes pierced through the logs, through which to shoot if attacked.¹⁷

¹²The Wanderer, "Notes From Pioneer History of Madison, Brief Sketches of Early Settlers," Number 4, Madison Weekly Herald, October 24, 1889; Reminiscence of an "Old Citizen," Madison Evening Courier, September 7, 1883.

¹³Melish, Travels in the United States, II, 142.

¹⁴Hendricks, Biographical and Historical Souvenir, 184.

¹⁵Ibid., 167.

¹⁶Madison Western Eagle, January 21, 1814.

¹⁷Hendricks, Biographical and Historical Souvenir, 184.

During the years of unrest on the frontier caused by the War of 1812 both Madison's courthouse and jail served as protections against Indian attack. The courthouse and jail were constructed in 1811 but since Melish does not mention them in his description of the settlement in the summer of that year it seems likely they were not put up until the fall. The jail was one log house inside of another built soundly enough to retain "rogues and malfactors." The twelve-foot square log structure was on the alley south of Main Cross between Main and Walnut east of the courthouse. The log courthouse, a two-story building of buckeye logs, with outside stairs on the south side going up to the jury rooms, stood on the south half of courthouse square. When a brick courthouse was built in 1819 the old one was moved to the south side of Main Cross, west of Main, where for many years it served as storeroom and dwelling.¹⁸

When Melish visited the Ohio Valley in 1811 he found the inhabitants "mostly all new settlers, and in very poor circumstances."¹⁹ While virtually all shared the common condition of poverty, travelers reported the settlers of new towns differed widely in character. Elias P. Fordham in 1817-1818 found the settlements on the frontier generally inhabited with "boatmen, and petty traders in horses and whiskey," some of whom were connected with horse stealers and forgers. A new community apparently took its citizens where it could find them but these rascals inhabited the new towns only until the settlement rose in importance; when, as

¹⁸Thomas, Travels Through the Western Country, 117; Hendricks, Biographical and Historical Souvenir, 184.

¹⁹Melish, Travels in the United States, II, 134.

Fordham wrote, the scamps moved off.²⁰ Morris Birkbeck described nine out of ten inhabitants of towns "from Norfolk on the eastern coast, to the town of Madison in Indiana" good-looking and neatly dressed, though not what he would have called gentlemanly. They were tall and long-limbed approaching, or even exceeding six feet with a penchant for tilting back in their chairs. "If a hundred Americans of any class," he wrote, "were to seat themselves, ninety-nine would shuffle their chairs to the true distance, and then throw themselves back against the nearest stop."²¹

The circumstances of Madison's early settlers matched their simple environment. John Paul was an exception; sometime prior to 1814 he employed a brickmaker and built the first brick structure in Madison. The building, which remained his residence until he died, stood above the second bank of the river at the northwest corner of Main and High streets. During these early years he also built Madison's earliest grist mill on Crooked Creek to the north and west of Old Town, where Mill Street later crossed that stream. Water from the stream powered the mill, which was grinding corn by 1814.²² When in 1814 the territory chartered the Farmers' and Mechanics' Bank in Madison, Paul became its president. The common practice in the country during the early federal period was to give the presidency of a bank to one of the most prestigious persons in the community.²³

²⁰Fordham, Personal Narrative, 168.

²¹Birkbeck, Notes on a Journey in America, 94.

²²Bicknell, The Vawter Family, 388.

²³Fritz Redlich, The Molding of American Banking: Men and Ideas (2 parts, New York, 1951), Part I, 20, 37.

John Paul, Lewis Davis, and Jacob Burnet, a friend of Paul from Cincinnati, in July 1815 made the first addition to Old Town.²⁴ It extended west between High and Fourth streets from West Street to Broadway.²⁵ Two years later Burnet and Lewis Whiteman were responsible for the second addition, extending north between East and Main streets from Fourth to Fifth streets (Figure 1).²⁶ The village still only "contained about one hundred and fifty people" by 1817 and the early settlers had made little advance toward improvement. "It was wholly without streets," wrote James F. D. Lanier in recollection of his first arrival in Madison in 1817, "or any improvement fitted to make it an attractive or agreeable place."²⁷ But some signs of the village's growing affluence had begun to appear, for while most of its buildings remained log structures, two brick buildings in addition to Paul's had been added: the one a "very large" livery stable, the other the Farmers' and Mechanics' Bank on the east side of Main Street just north of Second Street. The bank was a "very handsome and commodious" structure "forty by fifty feet [in frontage], and two stories high."²⁸

Madison flourished during the next several years but no further geographic expansion took place. The Indiana Republican in 1820 reported

²⁴Jacob Burnet to J. Delafield, Jr., October 1837 in Transactions of the Historical and Philosophical Society of Ohio (Cincinnati, 1839), 62.

²⁵Original Plat Book, 1-A (Recorder's Office, Jefferson County Court House, Madison, Indiana), 9, 41.

²⁶Ibid., 42.

²⁷Lanier, Sketch of the Life, 10.

²⁸Thomas, Travels Through the Western Country, 196; Hendricks, Biographical and Historical Souvenir, 193-94.

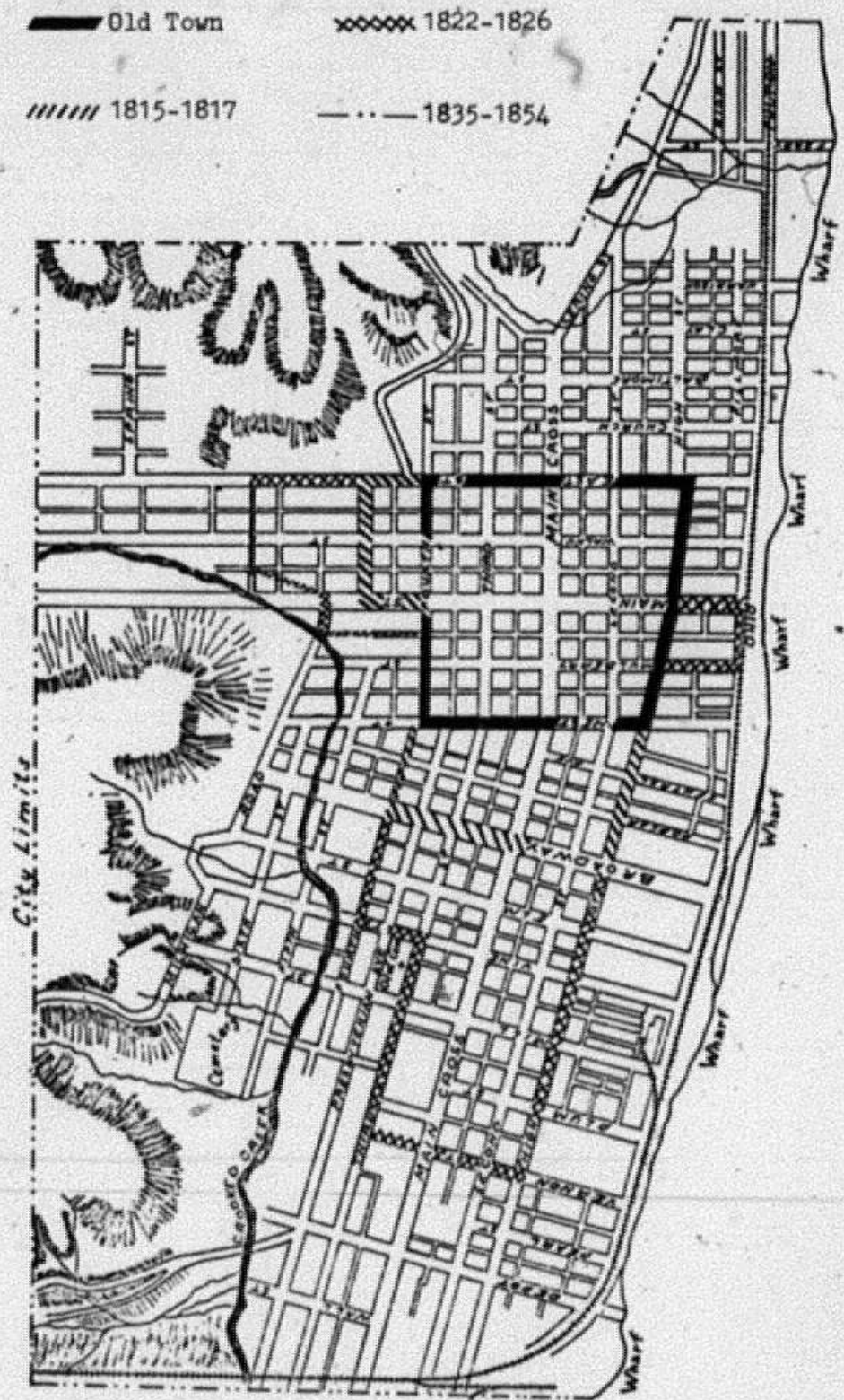


Figure 1. Geographic Expansion of Madison, 1811 to 1854.

Madison had a population of 984 persons living in 133 dwellings. The white population, 936, was almost equally male and female, being 505 and 431 respectively. At the time the town was a youthful community with over two-thirds of the white inhabitants, 676, under 26 years of age. Madison also had a small black population of 48 souls, less than five percent of the total.²⁹ Presumably, it had adequate room without additions to the town.

A measure of the growing affluence and importance of Madison, reflected in its population growth, may be found in the new building during this period. Fire consumed the old jail in September 1817 and a new one soon took its place.³⁰ Built from logs hewn 10 by 20 inches, it had an outside dimension of 22 by 24 feet. It was two stories high with a double wall of timbers and a shingle roof. The lower floor had two rooms with a passage and stairway in the end, while the upper story was one large room. David Hillis built the new jail east of the old one at a cost of \$800.³¹ This period also saw what was probably the earliest three-story brick building raised in Madison, built in 1819 by Israel T. Canby on Main Cross.³² The new courthouse constructed in 1819 surpassed anything erected up to that time; it was an octagon shaped brick structure, two stories in height. The courtroom occupied the lower floor with the judges' bench on the east

²⁹Madison Indiana Republican, September 7, 1820.

³⁰Ibid.; September 6, 1817.

³¹County Commissioners Record Book "A," February 1817 to November 1822, Jefferson County Indiana (Auditor's Office, Jefferson County Court House, Madison, Indiana), 55-69.

³²Madison Indiana Republican, July 24, 1819.

side on a raised platform. Immediately behind the judge's chair was a large window and on either side were the chairs of the associate judges. About half of the room was railed off for use of the bar, clients, witnesses, and officers of the court. On the south side a stairway led to jury rooms on the upper floor.³³ This courthouse, located on the site of the old one, served Madison and Jefferson County until destroyed by fire in 1853.³⁴

Much of Madison's affluence, reflected in its population growth and new building, came from the profitable trade it enjoyed as an entrepot for southeastern Indiana. Elias P. Fordham reported in 1817 that for western merchants "75 to 100 per cent is reckoned a good profit; 50 per cent is a living profit; 25 pr. cent, will not keep a man to his business, he will look out for something else."³⁵ During Madison's early years, until about 1830, merchants dealt with Philadelphia and Baltimore, making annual trips by horseback to purchase goods.³⁶ Goods arrived at Madison on the spring or fall rises of the river. There seems to have been little export trade. Birkbeck reported in 1817 that such was the influx of strangers into Indiana "that the industry of the settlers is severely taxed to provide for themselves, and a superfluity for newcomers." He estimated it would be a number of years before the home market for all the spare produce of the

³³County Commissioners Record Book "A," 171.

³⁴Madison Daily Courier, September 12, 1853.

³⁵Fordham, Personal Narrative, 121.

³⁶Reminiscence of an "Old Citizen," Madison Evening Courier, October 26, 1883.

state would decline.³⁷ From this it appears reasonable that immigrants to Indiana supplied much of the capital for Madison's growth, and service to these immigrants while they established themselves on the virgin land, was the hamlet's concern. Apparently for this reason Madison failed in the early period to improve its river front or expand the town to the river. Not until the end of the second period of expansion in 1826 did the town reach the river, which suggests that not until then did Madison's hinterland develop to the extent that the community needed facilities to handle bulk products of the farm.

During Madison's second period of expansion, between 1822 and 1826, developers made four additions to Madison, and perhaps significantly all, with exception of the salient toward the river in 1826, were to the north and west toward the agriculturally productive hinterland. Paul, Burnet, and Israel T. Canby platted the first extension west from Broadway to Vine Street between High and Fourth streets in February 1822; Burnet, and Israel T. and Joseph Canby platted the second, north from Fifth Street to the alley north of Sixth Street, between East Street and the alley west of Main, in October of the same year; Paul, Burnet, and Israel T. Canby platted the third in April 1824, west from Vine to Vernon streets, again between Third and High streets; and Abram King, in January 1826, platted the fourth between Mulberry and Main streets from High Street to the river (Figure 1).³⁸ This pattern of expansion presents the figure of an elongated arrowhead with the tip pointing toward the river and two

³⁷Birkbeck, Notes on a Journey in America, 93.

³⁸Original Plat Book, 1-A, pp. 10, 11, 17, 30, 42, 43.

unequal wings stretching toward the hinterland; the shorter wing reaching up Crooked Creek Hollow toward the north and east; the longer more substantial wing reaching toward Irish Hollow and the Three Percent Road to Indianapolis and the northwest.

When Paul sold the first lots in Madison he envisioned that nothing more than one warehouse and one ferry house should ever be built between High Street and the river.³⁹ Probably not much more than this was built in the early years, for the town did not even have a floating wharf prior to 1830, when Paul died. "For many years past," wrote the editor of the Indiana Republican in the year of Paul's death, "the people of this place have labored under the disadvantage of not having a wharf of any kind opposite our town, on which passengers and goods from steamboats could be landed. Passengers have been much annoyed and goods sometimes injured by being landed in the mud."⁴⁰ Export of agricultural produce by flatboat to New Orleans in 1829 had become an important part of Madison's trade. In January of that year, the Indiana Republican reported, "A considerable number of boats laden with pork, corn, flour, &c. &c. have departed from the landing at this place within a few weeks past for New Orleans, and many others are in a state of preparation soon to follow them." During the fall and winter of 1828-1829 a greater quantity of produce was shipped from Madison than ever before.⁴¹

³⁹Testimony of John Vawter, Trustees of the City of Madison vs John Paul, 3.

⁴⁰Madison Indiana Republican, March 3, 1830.

⁴¹Ibid., January 14, 1829.

The population of Madison increased during the decade of the twenties from 984 to 1,051 but the growth during those years was not constant. The sickly seasons which began in 1822 and lasted until 1824 no doubt caused a population as well as a business decline.⁴² A contemporary of the cholera epidemic that struck Madison in 1833 described the effect of the dread disease on the inhabitants of the town. "To realize and appreciate the conditions and appearance of things here, during that period of horror and desolation," he wrote, "would be impossible except and only for those who were present and able to endure its terrors." Many fled the town to find shelter and safety with friends and acquaintances in the country. Those who remained stayed in their homes nursing the sick and preparing the dead for burial. "Here and there, in the deserted streets, a few men might occasionally be seen talking in melancholy undertone, asking if this or that one, who had but an hour before been stricken, was still living?" The latest news having been obtained, they separated and returned to their homes, "strongly fearing that some of their loved ones had been attacked during their absence of a few moments." All the stores and shops of Madison closed under these conditions and "had every appearance of having been abandoned to their fate."⁴³ The cholera epidemic in 1833 was short, only several months, but in the 1820s the same scourge had lasted several years. When James F. D. Lanier graduated from Transylvania law school in 1823, Madison "had a population of about 300." With the end of the "sickly

⁴²City of Madison, Town Record, April 1824 to April 1833 (Clerk Treasurers Office, City Hall, Madison, Indiana), March 1, 1830; Wanderer, Number 5, Madison Weekly Herald, October 31, 1889.

⁴³Reminiscence of an "Old Citizen," Madison Evening Courier, November 7, 1883.

seasons," the population again increased. It stood at about 1,100 by 1825.⁴⁴

While Madison remained largely a community of log structures, in 1825 it had "12 to 15 good buildings erected, mostly brick." The town and vicinity had 24 stores--14 dry-goods, ten groceries--a market house, two taverns, two cotton spinning factories, a woolcarding establishment, two oil mills, a rope factory, a grist mill, a steam mill, and a printing office. It had two churches (Presbyterian and Methodist), a Masonic Hall, an academy, and some 180 dwellings.⁴⁵ In 1829 a building boom struck Madison with "about 30 buildings mostly brick" erected in that year.⁴⁶ A number of these new buildings were three stories in height, probably the first such erected since the Canby building. By 1831 Madison had 40 stores--27 dry-goods and 13 grocery--most of which doubtless sold goods at wholesale as well as retail.⁴⁷

Madison had begun to mature as a frontier settlement but not without cost to health and safety. Rubbish occasioned by construction of new buildings blocked the streets for months. More important, the passage by the town's trustees of ordinances against assault and for fire protection reflect growing concern with these problems. The town trustees in 1829 directed that "Any person who shall in the streets or alleys of said town, or within the bounds of the corporation, in any-wise disturb the

⁴⁴Lanier, Sketch of Life, 11; Madison Indiana Republican, September 23, 1830.

⁴⁵Ibid., November 15, 1827.

⁴⁶Ibid., January 20, 1830.

⁴⁷Ibid., September 8, 1831.

public peace, shall for every such offense be fined not exceeding three dollars, and be imprisoned not exceeding seventy-two hours."⁴⁸ Fires constituted an even greater danger to the community as population and building increased. The trustees sought to deal with this problem by passing an ordinance preventing "the erection of any wooden building or buildings either frame, or logs" within certain prescribed limits. These limits extended "from Main to West Street and from High to Third streets inclusive" in 1830 but eventually the limits extended from Broadway to East Street and from High to Fourth Street.⁴⁹ The town trustees did not deal directly with the problem of fires until 1831 when they ordered that "it shall be the duty of the owner or occupant of every house within this town, to provide a good substantial leather fire bucket, sufficient to contain two and a half gallons of water, well painted or glazed...suspended in some convenient place in the house, ready to be delivered and used in the extinguishing of fire, whenever any may occur."⁵⁰ As early as 1829 the editor of the Indiana Republican had called for the trustees to purchase "a fire engine" but not until 1832 did they do so.⁵¹ Not until 1835 did they organize a fire-fighting force, relying on volunteers to man buckets and fire engine. At that time the trustees enrolled twelve

⁴⁸ Madison, Town Record, June 3, 1829.

⁴⁹ Ibid., October 15, 1830; City Record Book "B," April 5, 1844 to January 3, 1850 (Clerk Treasurers Office, City Hall, Madison, Indiana), 38, 118.

⁵⁰ Madison, Town Record, March 31, 1831.

⁵¹ Madison Indiana Republican, December 30, 1829; Madison, Town Record, November 17, 1832.

men for fire duty and to take charge of the fire engine at a salary of six dollars per year.⁵²

Madison's emergence as a mature settlement occasioned growing concern for the health of the community. In a letter to the Indiana Republican a citizen decried the sight of "cleansing of door-yards, kitchens and gardens, thrown into the public highway." But even more he decried "the putrefaction process finely exemplified, in the decomposition of the heads and feet of many of the swinish multitude, who suffered last autumn, interspersed now and then with a superb specimen, in the shape of some domestic animal."⁵³ Such concern led to passage in 1831 of an "Ordinance to prevent and remove nuisances and to provide for the security of the public health of the town," and the following year the town organized its first Board of Health.⁵⁴ Thereafter ordinances regulating the health and welfare of the town's citizens became a feature of town government.

On the eve of its third and final period of expansion in April 1835, Madison contained an estimated 3,000 inhabitants; five churches--two Presbyterian, one Episcopal Methodist, one Protestant Methodist, and one Baptist--thirty wholesale and retail dry-goods stores and numerous retail grocery stores; a book store; a paper warehouse; a merchant mill propelled by steam, running four pairs of seven foot burrs; an extensive cotton spinning mill; a brewery; a steam saw mill; an oil mill; a burr mill-stone

⁵²City of Madison, Town Record, April 1833 to April 1838, (Clerk Treasurers Office, City Hall, Madison, Indiana), Feb. 6, 1835.

⁵³Madison Indiana Republican, May 5, 1831.

⁵⁴Madison, Town Record, July 12, 1831; Madison Indiana Republican, November 8, 1832.

factory; and a stone cutting yard.⁵⁵ By 1830 Madison had begun its "take-off into sustained growth," which lasted until the mid-1850s, but its economic expansion did not begin to influence its geographic expansion until June 1835. As a measure of the growing importance of Madison as a link between the export river trade and the agricultural produce of the hinterland, all the expansion in 1835 and 1836 was between High Street and the river.

Joseph Canby, W. G. Wharton, Alois Bachman, Timothy Barber, and Mary Jane Robinson in June 1835 platted the river block between West and Mulberry streets from High Street to the river. John Sheets in October 1835 platted the river block between Central and Poplar Lane, making the third river block developed in Madison. In 1836 John Sheets platted the area around Ferry Street extending from Sering Street to the river.⁵⁶ The Sheets addition marked the earliest development of any part of Madison east of East Street. James Howard located his Madison boatyard in this area between Ohio Street and the river in 1836 and launched from there the Livingston, the first steamboat he built in Madison.⁵⁷

The growing interest in platting the Madison river front property paralleled the development of wharf facilities along the river. Madison obtained its first floating wharf "for the purpose of receiving and forwarding goods to and from the steamboats" in 1830,⁵⁸ but it was not until

⁵⁵Madison Republican and Banner, April 16, 1835.

⁵⁶Original Plat Book, 1-A, pp. 18, 21, 27, 41, 44.

⁵⁷Madison Republican and Banner, October 12, 1836.

⁵⁸Madison Indiana Republican, February 17, 1830.

several years later that the town built a permanent wharf. In May 1833 trustees of the town caused to be made at the foot of Main Street a wharf extending "100 ft. from the north side of Ohio street at descent of 8" in 10 ft. then 14" in 10 ft. to its termination."⁵⁹ Earth from the grading of Main Street was used in the wharf. The town constructed other wharves at the foot of Mulberry Street in 1834, West Street in 1835, and between Walnut and East streets in 1836.⁶⁰ These community facilities remained the wharves in Madison until 1845, when William Griffin built a wharf at the bend of the railroad, opposite his pork warehouse.⁶¹ Private initiative and town enterprise then built and expanded Madison's wharves until they extended over much of the river front (Figure 1). By 1851 Madison had six permanent wharves--the Mammoth Cave Pork House Wharf east of Harrison Street, the Walnut Street Wharf, the City Wharf between Main and West streets, the Depot Wharf opposite the railroad depot, the Magnolia Wharf adjacent to the Depot Wharf, and the Palmetto Wharf west of Depot Street.⁶²

Scarcely a year passed between 1835 and 1854 that some new area of Madison was not opened for development. Developers platted 25 separate areas of Madison. Some additions, like that of W. W. Page and Robert Cravens (the half block east of Plum Street between High and Ohio streets, platted in 1854), were small, others, such as the Sering-Leonard addition

⁵⁹Madison, Town Record, May 7, 1833.

⁶⁰Ibid., April 1, 1834; June 12, 1835; and, January 1, 1836.

⁶¹Madison Weekly Courier, June 21, 1845.

⁶²Madison Daily Courier, May 12, 1851.

and the Hendricks-Grover addition, were quite large. John Sering and George Leonard platted the area between Fourth Street and the bluffs behind Madison and west from Canby's addition to Plum Street in 1838, following the opening of the Michigan Road. William Hendricks and Benjamin Grover, in anticipation of completion of the Madison and Indianapolis Railroad, platted the area west of Vernon Street to the railroad and south of Main Cross to the river in 1839.⁶³

The broad lines of antebellum Madison had largely been completed and virtually all its details sketched in by 1854. Perhaps even more important, the general economic characteristics and demographic qualities of Madison remained unchanged until 1860. The population of Madison was 8,021 in 1850 and in 1860 had increased to only 8,130. The first full directories of the city published in 1859 and 1860 provide a reliable picture of Madison at the apogee of its pre-Civil War development.⁶⁴

Processing of farm produce had been the industry of Madison from the time Paul first located his grist mill on Crooked Creek. By the fifties Madison entrepreneurs had expanded its processing industry from Paul's small water-powered mill to a myriad of large steam-powered merchant mills, breweries, starch and spice factories, lumber mills, candle, soap and glue factories, tanneries, and slaughter and pork packing houses.⁶⁵ Many of these establishments were on the periphery of Madison, south of High Street,

⁶³Original Plat Book, 1-A, pp. 11-12, 20, 37, 38, 45.

⁶⁴Williams' Madison Directory, City Guide, and Business Mirror, Volume I, 1859-1860, compiled by C. S. Williams (Madison, 1859); George W. Hawes, Madison Business Directory, for 1860 (Indianapolis, 1860).

⁶⁵Williams' Madison Directory, 10.

north of Fourth, east of East Street, west of Vernon Street (Figure 2), where they had access to water and were near the main lines of transportation.⁶⁶ This was particularly the case for the bulk product industries, such as flour milling and slaughtering.

Another reason these industries were on the periphery of Madison perhaps was the danger to health which many people believed the organic waste from the industries produced.⁶⁷ Cholera, as noted, remained a threat and it was popularly believed that the decomposition of animal and vegetable matter was a cause of "infectious fever." "Perhaps the beauty of the surrounding scenery," wrote one citizen about the wanderings of a hypothetical visitor, "may tempt him to the outskirts. Then will he wish that the handle of his face were brass and his olfactory nerves iron. There, even now the dangerous effluvia is overpowering. Wait but till the warm sun of June operates upon it, and that which is now disagreeable, will then become deadly. Nine-tenths of the epidemics

⁶⁶Locations plotted on this and subsequent line drawing maps of Madison have come from addresses given in the Williams' Madison Directory and Hawes' Business Directory.

⁶⁷The term organic is used here to apply to those industries which produced an animal and vegetable waste considered dangerous to public health. As early as 1822 a Grand Jury in Madison declared the Paul mill a public nuisance because it had a "large body of stagnant water, containing decayed and decaying vegetable matter." Madison Western Clarion, March 20, 1822. Similarly, in 1833 the town trustees declared the slaughter house of Thomas L. Paine on Crooked Creek, a public nuisance for his failure properly to manage the waste it produced. In 1835, the town trustees passed "An ordinance to prevent the killing and slaughtering of hogs, beef cattle, sheep and calves within the corporate jurisdiction of the Town of Madison." Madison, Town Record, August 21, 1835.

Conversely the term inorganic applied to those industries such as lumber mills, which produced a waste (perhaps technically organic) that was not considered detrimental to health.



Figure 2. Distribution of Madison Industries,
1850 to 1860.

which desolate particular districts, have their origins in causes like this."⁶⁸

Slaughter houses caused the greatest offense to the "olfactory nerves" and the greatest quantity of "dangerous effluvia"; they were located at the farthest reaches of the town. In the decade of the fifties Madison had three such establishments--the Big Hoosier, on Crooked Creek near West Street, Mammoth Cave Pork House, on Ohio Street east of Ferry Street, and The Model House, on Crooked Creek immediately above the road to North Madison, between the creek and the hill. The earliest slaughter house in Madison was the Big Hoosier, but the largest was the Mammoth Cave Pork House.⁶⁹ The grounds of Mammoth Cave contained over eight acres, with an eleven-hundred-foot frontage on the Ohio River "including a good Wharf." Its buildings comprised "Slaughtering, Hanging, and Packing Houses, two Stone Warehouses, two large Brick Smoke Houses, Brick Lard Rendering House, Stable, Sheds and Paved Pens, all of the most substantial quality."⁷⁰

Proximity to moving water to help carry away the waste helped determine the location of the slaughterhouses. In the early stages of pork packing so little demand existed for any portion of the hog other than the hams, shoulders, sides, and lard that heads, spare ribs, neckpieces, and backbones were discarded.⁷¹ "The red appearance of the surface of the river this morning," reported the Daily Courier in

⁶⁸Madison Indiana Republican, May 5, 1831.

⁶⁹Madison, Town Record, December 13, 1833.

⁷⁰Madison Daily Courier, July 5, 1856.

⁷¹Rudolf A. Clemen, The American Livestock and Meat Industry (New York, 1923), 96.

1855, "was occasioned by the plucks thrown into it at the Mammoth Cave slaughter house. At one time the surface of the river was covered with them."⁷² The periodic flooding of Crooked Creek brought unwanted hardship for many residents of Madison, but for the slaughterhouses along its banks, it brought a housecleaning. The Daily Courier reported that a flood of Crooked Creek in the spring of 1850 was "just high enough to thoroughly cleanse the banks of the Creek, and the grounds adjoining and under the slaughter-house; so that, instead of any damage resulting from the flood, it acted as a specific for perfectly purifying the bed of the Creek, and the entire grounds which the pork-houses occupy."⁷³

The noise and air pollution of inorganic waste producing industries, such as foundries, steam cooperage factories, furniture factories, and lumber mills, did not offend the community to the same extent as the slaughterhouses and the other organic waste producers. Nonetheless, the second group of industries also tended to locate on the periphery of the town, although closer than the slaughterhouses. James Crawford and William Davidson, proprietors of the Indiana Foundry built their factory in the block from Vine to Elm streets between Second and High streets. In their extensive iron foundry and steam engine manufactory the two men cast steam engine cylinders that required as much as two and a half tons of liquid metal for one unit.⁷⁴ Such work demanded intense heat, which must have caused much smoke from the soft coal commonly used, to say nothing of the

⁷²Madison Daily Courier, December 20, 1855.

⁷³Ibid., March 7, 1850.

⁷⁴Ibid., June 19, 1855.

noise that attended the pouring and machining of such large castings.⁷⁵ The Indiana Foundry stood opposite the High Street mansion of James F. D. Lanier, and so far as is known, caused no great concern to Madison's leading banker. Similarly, the lumber mill of John Todd and H. C. Kyle, on the north side of Second Street, between Poplar and Central streets, apparently did not seriously disturb its neighbors, including Jeremiah Sullivan, one of Madison's foremost jurists, and John Sheets, one of its leading entrepreneurs. The buzzing of the mill's saws and smoke from its steam engine, in addition to the constant coming and going of its customers, were an accepted aspect of life for leading citizens.

Madison's inorganic waste producing industries, particularly its foundries and railroad car manufacturing shops, tended to be west of Elm Street while its breweries and meat packers were east of West Street. The major ethnic groupings--Irish and German--in Madison also tended to follow these industrial divisions (Figure 3).⁷⁶

⁷⁵In 1851 the editor of the Daily Courier estimated that Madison industry consumed "five hundred thousand bushels of coal annually." Madison Daily Courier, April 21, 1851.

⁷⁶In Figure 3 the designation of areas of highest Irish and German concentration is based on the distribution of all heads of families whose place of birth was reported as the Germanies or Ireland in the 1860 Federal Census, and for whom an address was given in Williams' Madison Directory (1860).

The City of Madison altered its ward boundaries in 1854, but a comparison of wards as designated in the 1850 Federal Census with those of the 1860 Census indicates that the change was slight. The boundaries of Madison's wards remained unchanged from 1854 to 1860 and were as follows:

First Ward	--	between East Street and City Limit
Second "	--	" " " " Walnut Street
Third "	--	" Walnut " " Main "
Fourth "	--	" Main " " Mulberry "



Figure 3. Distribution of Irish, German and Black Groups in Madison, 1850-1860.

Madison enjoyed considerable geographic integration of residents based on place of birth, as indicated in Tables I and II but Germans tended to concentrate in the First to Third Wards east of Main Street while the Irish were almost equally divided between these wards and Wards Eight and Nine. Many Irish had come to Madison as laborers to help build the incline plane for the Madison and Indianapolis Railroad in the late 1830s.⁷⁷ After its completion in 1841 many remained. In 1853, the Irish were again laborers on the railroad route along Clifty Hollow west of Madison, which was intended to by-pass the incline plane.⁷⁸ Many then left Madison as the demand for labor declined.⁷⁹ It is not known exactly when the Germans came to Madison in large numbers, but their employment largely in the brewing and pork packing industries suggests their arrival in the late 1840s and early 1850s as these industries began to expand rapidly. The increase in adult male Germans between 1850 and 1860 while other foreign born, particularly Irish, declined, supports this conclusion.

Fifth Ward	--	between Mulberry Street and Poplar Street
Sixth "	--	" Poplar " " Elm "
Seventh "	--	" Elm " " Mill "
Eighth "	--	" Mill " " Vernon "
Ninth "	--	" Vernon " " City Limit

Ordinances of the City of Madison, in the County of Jefferson, and State of Indiana, Passed Since the 13th of April 1848 (Clerk Treasurers Office, City Hall, Madison, Indiana), 210.

⁷⁷Madison Republican and Banner, February 14, 1838; Reminiscence of Lucien V. Rule, Goshen, Kentucky, no date, in Madison and Indianapolis Railroad File (Jefferson County Library, Madison, Indiana).

⁷⁸Madison Daily Courier, April 18, 1853.

⁷⁹Ibid., January 20, 1855.

Table I. Place of Birth of Adult Males in Madison by Ward in 1850.

	Ward						
	1-3	4	5	6	7	8-9	Total
South	238	30	44	62	36	81	491
East	121	34	43	45	38	50	331
Midwest	169	31	42	71	44	59	416
German States	217	24	9	12	3	21	286
Ireland	137	38	38	30	25	105	373
Other Foreign	98	19	11	24	11	17	180
Total	980	176	187	244	155	333	2,075

Source: Microfilm of the U. S. manuscript population schedule for 1850.

Table II. Place of Birth of Adult Males in Madison by Ward in 1860.

	Ward						
	1-3	4	5	6	7	8-9	Total
South	102	25	40	42	25	72	306
East	55	24	47	38	34	51	249
Midwest	152	40	48	64	53	84	441
German States	277	56	50	23	9	59	447
Ireland	73	8	23	29	15	86	234
Other Foreign	65	12	8	16	9	28	138
Total	724	165	221	212	145	380	1,847

Source: Microfilm of the U. S. manuscript population schedule for 1860.

Madison never had a large black population but, in percentage growth, it tended to keep pace with whites. From 1820 to 1850 the white population increased 724 percent, from 936 to 7,714, while the black population increased 521 percent, from 48 to 298.⁸⁰ Though blacks never constituted more than five percent of the population, evidence of separation of the races appeared as early as 1827 when the town set aside the northeastern corner of the old cemetery as a separate black burial ground.⁸¹ This

⁸⁰U. S., Statistics of the Population of the United States (Washington, 1872), 126.

⁸¹Madison Indiana Republican, May 17, 1827.

practice continued when a new cemetery opened in 1846.⁸² Apparently some residents sought to thwart the separation of the races, which brought down the censure of the editor of the Weekly Courier, "There are tendencies," he wrote in 1843, "towards an amalgamation of black and white society in Madison, that in time may lead to serious consequences. Why will the professed friends of the negro race, persist in a course that must bring destruction or exile upon them."⁸³

Tables III and IV indicate the geographic distribution of blacks and whites in Madison in 1850 and 1860. While blacks were found in all the

Table III. Distribution of Whites and Blacks in Madison by Ward in 1850.

	Ward						
	1-3	4	5	6	7	8-9	Total
Whites	3,617	561	700	840	565	1,431	7,714
Blacks	199	23	16	37	22	1	298

Table IV. Distribution of Whites and Blacks in Madison by Ward in 1860.

	Ward						
	1-3	4	5	6	7	8-9	Total
Whites	3,167	652	872	893	590	1,709	7,883
Blacks	105	16	35	26	31	34	247

Source: U. S., Statistics of the Population of the United States (Washington, 1872), 126.

wards with the exception of the First, most of them lived in the poorer sections south of High and north of Fourth streets. The largest number,

⁸²City Record Book "B," Feb. 20, 1846; Madison Weekly Courier, February 28, 1846.

⁸³Madison Weekly Courier, September 2, 1843.

some 23 families in 1860, lived in the Third Ward north of Fourth between Walnut and Main streets (Figure 3).⁸⁴ This concentration suggests that Madison by 1860 had begun to add segregation in housing to that practiced in burial.

The black community's development of many of its institutions by the decade of the fifties offers evidence of the growing racial separation. Madison in 1849 had its earliest known black church, a Methodist Episcopal Church on Walnut above Fifth Street. By 1860, the town had three black churches, all in the Fifth Street area: an African Methodist Episcopal Church on Fifth between Walnut and Main; a Baptist Church on the north side of Fifth between Mulberry and West Street; and the Methodist Episcopal Church on Walnut above Fifth Street.⁸⁵ In conjunction with these churches, blacks maintained their own schools supported in part by the proceeds from an annual dinner in celebration of the abolition of slavery in the West Indies.⁸⁶ There was also a black order of the Masons with its own meeting hall.⁸⁷

Unlike the town's poorer citizens, who tended to live on the periphery, its wealthier citizens generally lived in the "central city," in the area between Mill and East streets and Fourth and High streets (Figure

⁸⁴ Identification of black families in Figure 3 is based on all black heads of families reported in the 1860 Federal Census for whom location could be made from Williams' Madison Directory.

⁸⁵ Williams' Madison Directory, 15.

⁸⁶ Madison Daily Courier, July 29, 1854.

⁸⁷ Ibid., August 23, 1853.

4).⁸⁸ Since Madison's site was geographically a convex peninsular tongue of land sloping toward both Crooked Creek and the Ohio River, the middle of the city was the most desirable residential area. Within this broad area there appears to have been a socially elite section, distinct from the remainder of the town.

Tables V and VI report the residences of Madison's principal real property owners and entrepreneurial leaders by Ward in 1850 and 1860.

Table V. Ward Residence in 1850 of Madison Elite by Place of Birth.

	Ward						Total
	1-3	4	5	6	7	8-9	
South	23	8	3	18	11	9	72
East	25	8	10	15	11	5	74
Midwest	5	1	1	12	7	3	29
Foreign	19	7	1	6	0	1	34
Total	72	24	15	51	29	18	209

Source: Microfilm of the U. S. manuscript population schedule for 1850.

Table VI. Ward Residence in 1860 of Madison Elite by Place of Birth.

	Ward						Total
	1-3	4	5	6	7	8-9	
South	6	3	7	9	2	5	32
East	6	4	4	9	11	1	35
Midwest	2	3	1	9	2	2	19
Foreign	9	5	3	2	0	1	20
Total	23	18	15	29	15	9	106

Source: Microfilm of the U. S. manuscript population schedule for 1860.

⁸⁸ The location of Madison's wealthier citizens shown in Figure 4 is based on four groups of property and entrepreneurial leaders whose place of residence appeared in Williams' Madison Directory: (1) those who purchased land in Madison between 1811 and 1820; (2) those who owned \$2,500 or more in real estate in Madison in 1844; (3) those who invested



Figure 4. Distribution of Madison's Elite Residences, 1850-1860.

Madison's elite, regardless of place of birth, lived in all Madison's several wards, but the Sixth Ward, between Poplar and Elm streets, attracted more than any other single ward. All Madison's most active property owners and entrepreneurial leaders, with exception of John McIntire, who had his house in the First Ward, lived in the Sixth Ward or immediately adjacent to it. Lanier lived in the Sixth Ward on the northeast corner of Elm and High streets before building a house just outside the ward on High between Elm and Vine streets.

Containing the wealthiest of Madison's citizens, the central area also boasted its stately houses. Among them were those of John Woodburn, Charles Shrewsbury, Jeremiah Sullivan, Michael G. Bright, Howard Watts and David White. The house of Lanier surpassed all in stateliness and size. Built by a Baltimore carpenter-architect, Francis Costigan, in 1844, the mansion measured 67 feet by 54 feet. A brick structure, the house included three stories with stone foundation walls two-feet thick. On the south side, facing the river, Costigan built a portico 12 feet wide and 50 feet long. Four columns, measuring upwards of 30 feet in height and having Vignola's Corinthian proportions, supported the roof. The capitals, though not full Corinthian, were reduced to accurate proportions with each column having 24 elliptical flutes, turning out in leaves, on which rested the capitals. A master craftsman as well as an architect, Costigan executed with his own hands much, if not all the ornamental work and decorations on the various parts of the mansion.⁸⁹

in and directed Madison's early corporations between 1814 and 1844; and (4) those who invested in and directed Madison's corporations between 1845 and 1857. These groups are dealt with extensively in a subsequent chapter.

⁸⁹ Madison Republican and Banner, November 27, 1844.

Comparison of the Lanier house and the other large houses of the area in the 1850s with Madison's first cabins and log houses suggests the city's economic development in the intervening years.

In antebellum Madison most citizens walked to their jobs, the store, public offices, and places of entertainment. This pedestrian quality of life drew much of Madison's economic, social, and political activity toward its center. Figure 5 shows the geographic distribution of Madison's retail and wholesale merchants, who concentrated between Main and West streets and along Main Cross to Broadway.⁹⁰ Most of the merchants shown in Figure 5 beyond the central area were grocers. Movement of these merchants into the more residential areas suggests that Madison with a population of 8,130 in 1860, may have been approaching the limit in geographic dimension and population of the centralized pedestrian city. A few other small businessmen, mainly shoemakers, followed the grocer into the neighborhoods, suggesting a transition taking place.

Figure 6 shows the distribution of public facilities. Unlike merchants of all types who were disposed to concentrate in the central area, the distribution of public facilities varied. Government offices and social halls were in the central area while hotels and churches tended to locate outside. Madison had only three hotels between Walnut and Broadway, and High and Third streets. Eleven hotels were along the river or adjacent to the town's two produce markets on Broadway and Walnut streets. The river attracted Madison's hotels early and remained the focus of their location. The Washington Hotel, Madison's earliest

⁹⁰Location of Madison's wholesale and retail merchants in Figure 5 is based on addresses in Hawes, Madison Business Directory.

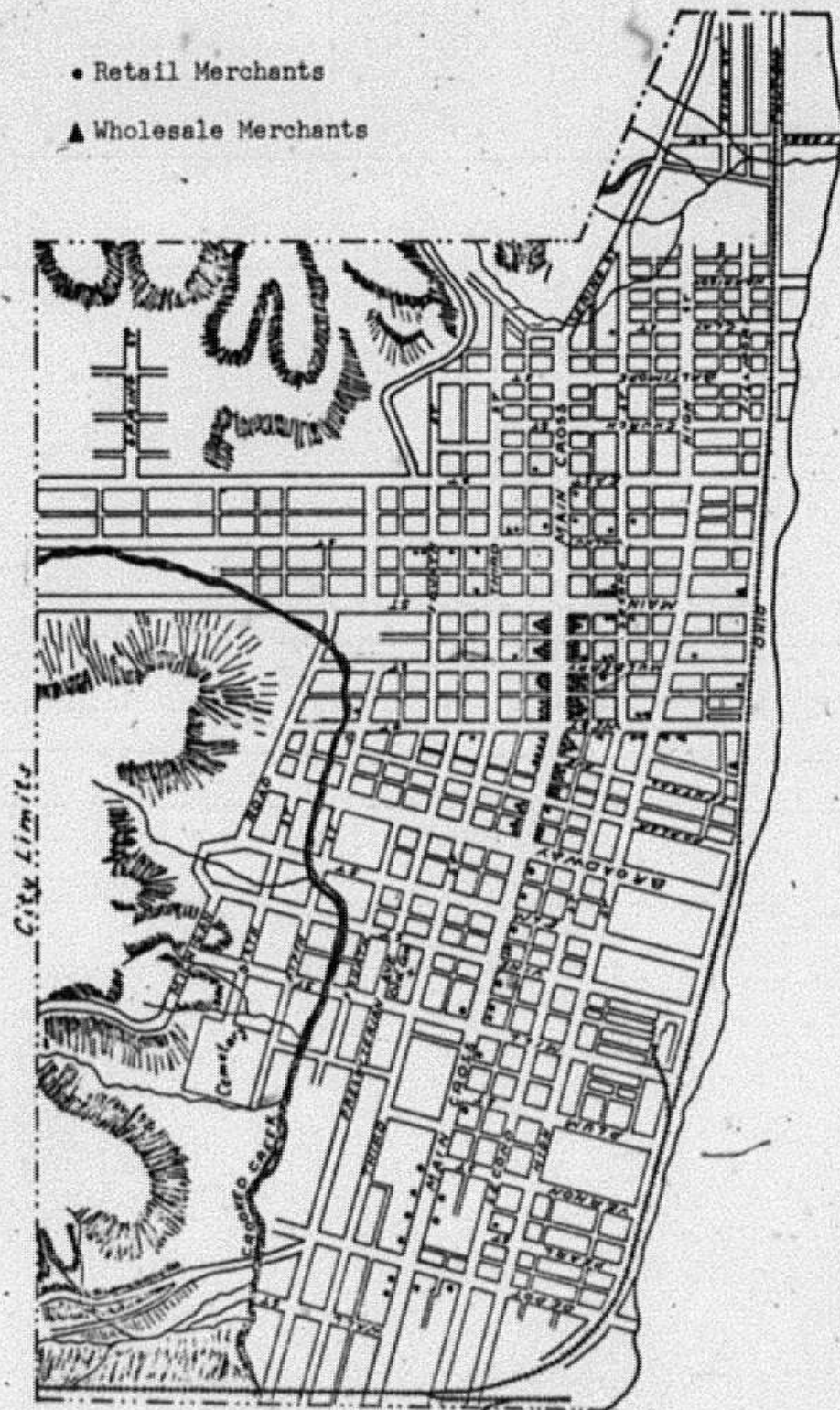


Figure 5. Distribution of Retail and Wholesale Merchants in Madison, 1850-1860.

brick hotel, was located on the northeast corner of Mulberry and Ohio streets by 1819,⁹¹ and the "Light House," the only building ever to stand between Ohio Street and the river, was a brick structure of uncertain date, considered very old in 1851.⁹² Transportation routes and the needs of the traveler determined the hotels' location.

Since churches related directly to the residents of Madison, their placement serves as an indicator of the denominational divisions of the place. The three black churches were in the area of highest black concentration, the German Catholic Church on Second Street between East and Walnut streets in an area of Germans. But the Irish Catholic Church, St. Michael's, on the north side of Third Street, west of Baltimore, was far removed from a large settlement of Irish (Figure 1). Catholics came early to Madison; the first Mass of which there is record was said in July 1815. The congregation a mixture of Irish and German Catholics, remained small and poor. When Bishop Simon Brute in 1837 authorized the solicitation and acceptance of contributions for building a church, funds came slowly. Father Michael E. Shawe, the first resident pastor, finally succeeded in obtaining a lot by donation from a Presbyterian, John McIntire, in 1838. Building of the church began soon after. Late in 1839, just a few days before Christmas, the church of St. Michael's was finished and ready for dedication.⁹³ The conception and building of St. Michael's coincided with

⁹¹Madison Indiana Republican, June 29, 1819.

⁹²Madison Daily Courier, May 6, 1851.

⁹³Thomas P. Conry, S. J., St. Michael's Church, Madison Indiana: A Pioneer Parish of Southern Indiana 1817-1937 (St. Meinrad, Indiana, n.d., circa 1939), 15-28; Sister Mary Salesia Godecker, Simon Brute de Remur (St. Meinrad, Indiana, 1931), 319, 339.



Figure 6. Distribution of Public Facilities in Madison, 1850-1860.

the settlement in Madison of large number of Irish Catholics who came as laborers on the Madison and Indianapolis Railroad. Probably for economic reasons, these laborers chose to settle closer to their work than to their church. The work of building the incline plane west of Madison took several years and established the pattern of Irish settlement in the western portion of the town. This placed a large segment of the congregation at a distance from their church.

In the almost fifty years from 1811 to 1860, Madison had progressed from hamlet to city. The configuration in the 1850s which emerges from that progression is a series of circles, one within the other. At the center lay the commercial, social, and governmental facilities around which much of Madison's daily life revolved. Adjacent were the residences of the elite. So long as Madison remained a pedestrian city, this location had ready access to facilities of the center. On the limits of the city lay its industries, and between those and the residences of the elite were the houses of the poor and laboring elements. Farthest removed from the services of the city, they stood nearest to its demands for manpower. This configuration differs from that of the industrialized city today but it compares in many respects with that of the preindustrial city out of whose technology and traditions Madison developed.⁹⁴ Arrested in the mid-course of its economic development, Madison stood on the threshold of the industrialized city but it never crossed that threshold. Neither an industrial city in the modern sense nor a preindustrial city in the full sense, Madison stood between the two, a transitional city that was not destined for transformation.

⁹⁴Gideon Sjöberg, The Preindustrial City, Past and Present (New York, 1965), 95-104.